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NOTICES FROM THE LICK OBSERVATORY.*

PREPARED BY MEMBERS OF THE STAFF.

MAGNITUDE ESTIMATES OF *NOVA PERSEI*.

Estimates of the brightness of the new star in *Perseus* have been made as regularly as possible since February 24th, when news of its discovery was received.

These estimates at first were made without any instrumental aid, by comparing the star with *Capella* α , ϵ , δ , ν , κ *Persei*. As the star's light faded, opera-glasses, and later the 3-inch finder of the 12-inch telescope, and still later the 12-inch telescope itself, were used, comparisons being made with the stars ψ , σ , ι *Persei*, and with BD + 43°.674, BD + 45°.778, BD + 44°.734; the magnitudes of the comparison stars being taken from HAGEN'S Chart I.

The observations show that the light of the *Nova*, while it has been fading, has been subject to marked fluctuations almost from the beginning — a fact that is abundantly confirmed by observers elsewhere. But no definite period of variation can be satisfactorily established from the observations made here, nor yet by combining with them those made at other places so far as these have been published.

The following table gives the magnitudes of the new star derived from my observations:—

1901.	P. S. T.	m	1901	P. S. T.	m
	^h			^h	
Feb. 24	8	0.5	Mar. 12	9	3.5
25	1	1.0	13	9	3.7
25	6:30	0.9	14	7—10	3.5
26	7:30	1.4	15	8	3.8
27	7	2.0	16	8	3.9
28	10	2.0	17	8—10	3.9
Mar. 1	8	2.4	18	8	4.0
2	7	2.4	19	7—9	4.1
3	7	2.5	20	7:30	4.5
4	8:20	2.5	22	8	4.7
5	7—10	2.7	23	7	4.0
6	7—10	3.0	28	8	4.7
8	7	3.2	28	10	5.0

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1901	P. S. T.		1901	P. S. T.	
	h	m		h	m
Mar. 29	9	5.0	Apr. 23	7:30—9:30	4.5
31	9	4.7	25	8	5.3
Apr. 1	9:30	4.5	26	8:30—9	5.4
4	7:30	4.2	May 2	8:45	4.7
5	8	4.7	3	8:15	5.4
6	8	5.0	4	8:30	6.0
7	8	5.4	5	8	6.0
8	9	4.2	6	8	5.8
9	8	5.0	7	8	4.4
10	9	5.5	8	8	5.3
11	8—10	5.7	9	8	5.8
13	7:30	6.0	10	8	6.0
14	8	6.1	11	7:50	6.0
15	8	6.1—6.2	12	8:30	5.7
16	8	6.0—6.1	13	8:15	5.5
17	7:30	4.4	14	8.20	5.7
19	8	5.5	15	8:25	6.0
20	8	6.2	16	8	5.8
21	8	5.6	17	7:50	4.7—4.8
22	8:30	4.7	19	8	6.0—6.2

May 22, 1901.

R. G. AITKEN.

NOTE ON COMET *a* 1901.

This comet was discovered independently at several stations in the southern hemisphere, and for a time was to southern observers a conspicuous object in the morning and later on in the evening sky.

Because of its position south of the Sun, it could not be seen at northern observatories during its period of greatest brightness. It was looked for here carefully on every clear evening and morning from April 26th, the date of the announcement of its discovery, until May 3d, when the cablegram from Arequipa showed that it had passed the Sun and become an evening object. The evening sky was then searched without success until Tuesday, May 14th, when in the strong twilight it was seen as a hazy star of about the eighth magnitude in R. A. $5^h 33^m$; Decl. $+ 3^\circ 34'$. This seems to have been the first observation made of the comet in the northern hemisphere.

Accurate observations secured on the evenings of May 15th and 16th, showed that it was a little behind the position predicted by Dr. KREUTZ's preliminary orbit, and that it was fading quite rapidly. On the latter date two stars, called 8.2 and 8.7 magnitude respectively in the Albany A. G. Catalogue, were in the telescope-field with the comet; the one was certainly brighter, the other fainter, than the comet. Last night, May 21st, it was fainter than a star of ninth magnitude,—too faint for accurate measures in the twilight and haze.

R. G. AITKEN.

May 22, 1901.